(b) if so, the reasons why the promoters of private colleges/institutions providing MBA and BBA courses are not taking similar approval from the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) and the University Grants Commission (UGC); and

(c) the steps Government propose to take against such institutions, including the Indian Institute of Planning and Management, New Delhi, to safeguard the interest of student community?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) The Central Government, Department of Health and Family Welfare in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, on the recommendation of the Medical Council of India or Dental Council of India, as the case may be, considers the proposals of the promoters of private medical and dental colleges and gives approval under provisions of Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and the Dentists Act, 1948 and regulations made thereunder respectively. As per Section 10 (k) of the All India Council for Technical Education (MCTE) Act, 1987, the AICTE, a statutory body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) grants approval for starting new technical institutions in engineering, pharmacy, architecture, town planning, management and applied arts and crafts.

The AICTE has been issuing Show Cause Notices individually to such technical institutions (including Indian Institute of Planning and Management, New Delhi) conducting unapproved courses as to why action should not be taken against them. Based on the responses received from the institutions, necessary action is being taken by the AICTE on case to case basis.

The AICTE has also issued Public Notices in the leading News Papers, informing students and the general public about the consequences of taking admissions in the unapproved technical institutions and has also advised institutions imparting technical education without AICTE approval, to obtain necessary approvals or close down the unapproved courses with immediate effect. In addition, a list of such unapproved institutions has also been published on the AICTE *website. www.aicte.ernet.in* for the information of students and the general public.

Sale price of natural gas

*120. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the sale price of natural gas from D6 block of KG basin is being increased abnormally, which would adversely affect the power sector;

(b) whether he has taken up the matter with his counterpart in the Ministry of 'Petroleum and Natural Gas and suggested some guidelines, based on which the sale price of natural gas is to be approved by them;

(c) if so, the details of guidelines and the reaction of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas thereto; and

(d) the action being contemplated to ensure that approved sale price is in line with the present benchmarked price, signed between NTPC and RIL?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (d) The Government has constituted an Empowered Group of Ministers (EGOM) to examine and consider the issues of gas pricing and commercial utilization of gas under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Research studies on global warming

744. SHRI. C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the research institutes under the Ministry are working in a coordinated manner to resolve issues pertaining to global warming, that are either directly or indirectly affecting the socio-economic growth of the country;

(b) if so, whether research studies are done on melting down of Himalayan Glaciers, increased occurrence of cyclone, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, flash floods, cloud bursts, etc;

(c) if so, the details thereof; along with the breakthrough made, if any; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD), the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), and other concerned institutes of the Ministry are working in a coordinated manner to address the science issues related to global warming. Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology(WIHG) is also pursuing research related to climate change/global warming using the various proxies and geological records. The findings on trends of climate change over the Indian region have formed the basis for further impact studies on socio-economic aspects carried out by other research groups.

(b) and (c) Several studies have been undertaken by the IITM, Pune, National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) and IMD on the cyclonic disturbances that form in Bay of Bengal and cross Andhra Coast. In general it was observed that the number of intense storms (monsoon depressions) that form over the Bay of Bengal have been showing a decline during the past 2-3 decades while there is a general increasing trend in the low-pressure systems (low-intensity). There are no conclusive results yet obtained on trends of flash floods and cloud bursts.

It is well-established fact that glaciers, in general, including the Himalayan glaciers, recede or build-up in response to variations in temperature of the region in which they are located. The analysis of temperature data for more than a century indicates slight increase of temperature, particularly in the winter season over the Western Himalayan region with some local variations. The recession in glaciers could be attributed to various reasons, including the possibility due to global warming. In the past 7,50,000 years, there have been Ice Age cycles, separated by warmer periods